

Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, DC 20554

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| In the Matter of |) | |
| |) | |
| Broadcast Localism |) | MB Docket No. 04-233 |
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To: Office of the Secretary
Attn: The Commission

COMMENTS

Neuhoff Family Limited Partnership, the licensee of WDAN-AM, WDNL-FM, WRHK-FM, Danville Illinois, pursuant to *Report on Broadcast Localism and Notice of Proposed Rulemaking*, FCC 08-218, MB Docket No. 04-233, released January 24, 2008, hereby submits its comments in this proceeding regarding the FCC's several proposed rule changes designed to enhance broadcast localism and diversity, to increase and improve the amount and nature of broadcast programming that is targeted to the local needs and interests of a broadcast station's community of service, and to provide more accessible information to the public about broadcasters' efforts to air such programming.¹

A. COMMUNICATION BETWEEN LICENSEES AND THEIR COMMUNITIES

¹ By *Public Notice*, DA 08-515, released March 6, 2008, time for filing comments in this proceeding was extended to April 28, 2008. Accordingly, these comments are timely filed.

1. *Community Advisory Boards.* The Commission's former ascertainment requirement directed broadcasters to comply with detailed, formal procedures to determine the needs and interests of their communities, at the time that they initially sought their station authorizations, asked for approval to obtain a station, and sought license renewal. The Commission believes that new efforts are needed to ensure that licensees regularly gather information from community representatives to help inform the stations' programming decisions including regular, quarterly licensee meetings with a board of community advisors and improved access by the public to station decision makers. The Commission proposes that each licensee should convene a permanent advisory board made up of officials and other leaders from the service area of its broadcast station. **It is our belief that in the example of small market broadcasters, maintaining close ties to local officials and community leaders is critical to our CURRENT business model. In most small markets, the local broadcaster must have their finger on the pulse of the community which serves the purpose of determining both need and service. I would view additional regulatory mandates as duplication of existing business practices by those locally focused broadcasters.**

2. *Remote Station Operation.* The Commission believes that the prevalence of automated broadcast operations which allow the operation of stations without a local presence has a negative impact upon the licensees' ability to

determine and serve local needs. The Commission is proposing that licensees maintain a physical presence at each radio broadcasting facility during all hours of operation. Our stations utilize the technology sited however it in no way affects the level of service to our community. In fact our company goes to great lengths to make it possible to have emergency local programming on the air during unattended hours of operation using remote access software and studios in the homes of employees. Our local officials maintain a contact list of key station employees who have the ability of local access regardless of hour. We also maintain an “on call” policy that ensures swift response to a local emergency situation. It’s our view that with the current technology in place, the existing policy is serving the needs of the public. In terms of the financial burden that would be placed on many small market broadcasters, in some cases doubling the size of their staffs, it would present an untenable position while creating only marginal improvements toward the issues sited by the commission.

B. NATURE AND AMOUNT OF COMMUNITY-RESPONSIVE PROGRAMMING

3. *Main Studio Rule.* The Commission concludes that licensees be required to locate their main studios within the local communities so that they are “part of the neighborhood” thus reverting to the Commission’s pre-1987 main studio rule in order to encourage broadcasters to produce locally originated

programming. In many cases, small market broadcasters have been able to provide service to greater areas as a result of this rule. While consolidating operations between cities in a geographic area a community broadcaster can afford to keep a broadcast service viable for those communities while making it feasible to serve smaller populations. It would be our view that many broadcasters would be harmed and therefore jeopardized local community service if the Commission changes the Main Studio Rule.

C. POLITICAL PROGRAMMING

4. *Voice-Tracking.* The Commission is seeking comment on the prevalence of voice-tracking and whether it can and should take steps to limit the practice, require disclosure, or otherwise address it, believing that such practices may diminish the presence of licensees in the communities and thus hinder their ability to assess the needs and interests of their local communities. **Our stations** have been using Voice-Tracking practices since the 1970's. Our stations have a strong community presence and our "local" voices project that strong community position. The local nature of the station image isn't tied exclusively to where the jock is as she announces the records, it's what the station is doing in total during the broadcast day that matters the most. The Commission shouldn't discount the value the community places on announcements, remotes, events, sponsorships,

service projects and coverage provided in times of community crisis, as a measurement in assessing the needs of local communities.

In conclusion Neuhoff Family Limited Partnership submits that the above comments should be taken into consideration by the Commission in issuing its decision in the above-referenced proceeding.

Respectfully submitted,

Neuhoff Family Limited Partnership

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April 28, 2008

